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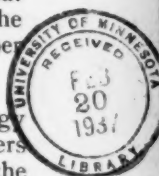
PARLIAMENT assembled this week for a session which will be dominated by foreign policy and finance. Mr. Eden opened the ball on Tuesday with an admirable rehearsal of the British attitude towards Continental countries and their conflicting aims and ambitions. If the speech contained nothing new, it is well to have in black and white what we think we can do in our own interest and in that of the world towards peace and co-operation. There are three competing political creeds in the world to-day, two new and one old—authoritarian, communistic and democratic. We stand upon the ancient ways which have led this country throughout the centuries to its proud position. Constitutional government suits us best, and that we should ever depart from it is a very remote contingency. But we do not attempt to impose our way of life on other nations which must choose the course most suited to their mentality. This was the substance of the Foreign Secretary's speech, which will find general acceptance. In finance Parliament will be mainly concerned with the Armaments loan, which it is hoped will make an increase in income tax—so crippling to any improvement in wages—unnecessary. The problem of the distressed areas, which is also a financial one, must be tackled in earnest. A factory bill, limiting the hours of work for young people and defining the conditions of labour, is also promised early consideration after much delay; and there is the Civil List to be settled, though this should lead to little difficulty or discussion. A full session, in fact, and one which, if hopes are fulfilled, should do much to dispel the fog in which the nations of the earth have wrapped themselves so unnecessarily.

THE Irish situation has been substantially eased by the prolonged meeting between Mr. de Valera and the Dominions Secretary at the invitation of the former. But it would be the greatest mistake to anticipate that anything approaching a settlement is in sight. Mr. de Valera is playing for time. He paints the mirage of a united Ireland, and uses it as a convenient means of increasing his popularity, though he must know well enough both that a united Ireland, however desirable eventually, is not in sight and that his present economic policy is widening the rift between the six and the twenty-six counties. Moreover, the economic policy, though not so disastrous as at one time seemed probable, is far from being successful. Ireland is and must always be mainly an agricultural country, importing what she cannot make in return for exporting food to her only possible customer. Hence the willingness to negotiate. England has always been willing to refer the dispute to arbitration, but hitherto Mr. de Valera's insistence on an international tribunal has been a fatal obstacle. When the economic

dispute is settled on fair terms, as it might well be at once, it will be time to consider constitutional questions. At present a settlement is more in Ireland's interest than in England's, and this fact encourages hope that a settlement will be reached. In the meantime let us recall the old saying that the history of Ireland is for Englishmen to remember and for Irishmen to forget.

CONSCRIPTION, it is now clear, was a bog raised by the Opposition to scare supporters of the Government and to drive voters into the Labour camp. As the scare was undoubtedly having a bad effect on recruiting—if one is to be conscribed, why bother to enlist?—it was well to scotch it at once, and the War Secretary has done so. There has been no discussion of conscription in time of peace. Nor should there be in a country such as ours. At the same time recruiting is unsatisfactory, though by no means so bad as some politicians falsely maintain. Attempts are being made to increase the amenities and attractions of the Service in minor ways, and it seems inevitable that there should be some increase of pay for the lowest rank of all. More important is education during service and better provision for employment after discharge. Towards the end of the war the Educational Branch was established, and under Lord Gorell excellent work was done in the vast problem which faced us then on demobilisation. To-day the problem is a much smaller affair, and no man should be discharged untrained for some post in civil life.

BISHOP KNOX'S death at the age of 89 is a reminder of two outstanding changes which have taken place in the leadership of the Church of England during his long life. He obtained three firsts and a fellowship at Oxford and took orders almost as a matter of course. How many of the next generation with three firsts followed his course? One thinks of Canon F. R. Barry, but where are the others? Mainly in the worlds of science and Government. Those who "go into the Church"—to use the vulgar tongue—are mainly those equally keen, no doubt, but content with a humbler degree, or candidates, subsidised in one way or another, from the training colleges. Secondly, Dr. Knox was an outstanding figure among the so-called evangelicals now considered old-fashioned, whose creed survives mainly among the leaders of nonconformity. It is significant that one of his sons is prominent in the Anglo-Catholic movement and another Roman Catholic chaplain at Oxford. Not that we note any Rome-ward tendency in this country: statistics show that the percentage of Romans is roughly what it was a century ago. Bishop Knox had all the vigour and tenacity of purpose which characterised the great Victorians. Both on scholarship and on



Church politics—witness the Prayer-book controversy—he left his mark. The reformed Church of the future will continue to be led by great men but by none quite of his stamp.

**S**IR FREDERICK POLLOCK'S death also deprives the country of another great Victorian. The head of one of our leading legal families, he followed the family rule and was eminent both as a humanist and as a lawyer. Evidence of his immense and long-sustained intellectual vitality may be read between the lines of a striking obituary notice in *The Times* of Tuesday.

Never seeking publicity and aloof from all the enjoyments and arts of popular esteem, Sir Frederick, a "celebrity" in many other countries, was known and revered in England wherever intellect and integrity of character were best appreciated. His eminence as a constitutional and international lawyer was unquestioned and unquestionable; his contributions as author, editor and consultant, to the scientific study and practice of law were of immense value; in the last months of his life, working from a sick bed and from memory, he rendered great services to the Government in the legal and constitutional issues raised by the abdication of the throne.

Here we can only add regrets at the loss of the head of a family long connected with the *Saturday Review*. Sir Frederick was a valued contributor until some years ago, and a younger brother, Walter Herries Pollock, edited it with great distinction until his untimely death.

**T**WO proposals for increasing the number of our governors came before the public. One was for the establishment of a Ministry of Childhood to co-ordinate the work of the four departments now concerned with the affairs and interests of the next generation. There was much to be said for the recent appointment of a distinguished lawyer to keep the authorities of the Navy, Army and the Air in closer touch with each other. Changing conditions demanded the change, which seems to be working well. But the various educational authorities are already in close touch, and their responsibilities are clearly defined, the Board of Education being mainly advisory, with the power of the purse subject to the consent of the Treasury. It seems to us that another ministry, with power to co-ordinate—a fashionable phrase at the moment—would merely complicate the smooth working of an organisation necessarily complex. The other proposal is for a Ministry of Amenities, intended apparently to help the Ministry of Transport and to get together the large number of societies and organisations which are trying with some success, to prevent the ruin of that rural beauty which is our heritage. We are entirely in favour of the movement, so widespread to-day, to preserve all that is lovely and of good report, but we doubt whether any Government department could add to the success of a voluntary effort which is in accordance with the English tradition. Let the law be strengthened where necessary, but here,

as in the case of the proposed Ministry of Childhood, the old rule holds good. *Entia non sunt multiplicanda*.

**T**HE latest picture designed to make the flesh creep is *Love from a Stranger*, at the London Pavilion. Mr. Vosper took a short story of Miss Christie's and made a play of it, from which a film has been evolved with the aid of no less a scenarist than Miss Frances Marion. The idea, which is presumably Miss Christie's, is neat; the last act of the play, which is presumably Mr. Vosper's, was excellent, but the film version adds little to the neatness of the one or the excellence of the other. It is no more than a photographed version of the play and, even when the fact dawns on the unfortunate woman that her husband has already murdered three women and is about to murder her, the situation is treated as a dramatist would handle it, and not as a director and a film scenarist should. The long scene is built upon dialogue, and for all the use which is made of the camera it might just as well not be there. It is to this climax that the rest of the picture is devoted and what goes before has the appearance of so much padding, an appearance which the camera does little to relieve. However, the scene when it does arrive is good theatre, even if it is bad cinema. The two principal parts in the film are taken by Ann Harding and Basil Rathbone. I am rather baffled as to why Ann Harding should have been shipped across the Atlantic to play the wife. She looks a very sensible, well-balanced young woman who would be the last person to throw over her fiancée, allow her head to be turned by the winning of a lottery and marry a young man about whom Scotland Yard is exercised. Basil Rathbone is a much happier choice.

**O**UR lives grow longer and longer. In Tuesday's *Times* we noticed the deaths of no fewer than 13 persons of the age of 90 and over, the majority being women. Why women live longer than men has always been something of a mystery. But two contributory causes are that living as they do mainly at home they are not so much exposed to bad weather in which the killing diseases are caught, and they are generally wiser in the matter of food and stimulants.

**I**NVESTMENT Trusts continue to grow in number, and since the report of the committee of inquiry, improved management has rightly led to greater confidence in their security. The movement failed in America owing to lack of confidence in the control, excessive costs of administration, and unwise choice of stock over which the investments were spread. The best of the trusts in this country, such as those known as the Moorgate Group, have paid steady dividends at a rate appealing to the small investor who has no wish to speculate but cannot afford to accept the meagre returns offered by gilt-edged. Given sound management and continued success, the movement is likely to grow, and it should make for national stability if more and more people put their savings into such trusts and so escape the maw of the bucket-shop shark.

## Leading Articles

### PARLIAMENT MEETS

**P**ARLIAMENT has met for one of the most momentous sessions in its history. Perhaps never before has the Budget been awaited with such interest by the whole world, for the peace of Europe depends on the re-armament of this country. How far the expenses of defence are to be met by taxation and how far by an Emergency Loan is a matter for the Government to decide and, whatever their decision is, the taxpayer will not grumble at paying a high premium to ensure security.

Unilateral disarmament has brought Europe nearer to war than anything that has occurred since 1918. The absurdity of it has become apparent even to its most ardent supporters. There is a vital distinction between ideals and fantasies. A fantasy is a delusion which paints an alluring picture without taking into account the material from which the picture must in fact be made. As a psychologist knows, fantasies are a symptom of neurosis. Too many of us have played with the Utopia of universal peace, blinding ourselves to the nature of mankind, on which that peace must depend. There is something to be said for the pacifist who regards peace as so important that he subordinates to it comfort, prosperity and life itself. Those who are prepared to give up everything, the Empire, wealth and freedom, rather than take part in war, are at least logical, but how many Englishmen are really prepared to accept this position? Their attitude becomes fantastic if they try to console themselves with the thought that such complete pacifism has never led to the suppression of the people who supported it. Unfortunately there are many examples in history which prove that this state of mind is no shield against annihilation.

It can be said that the country has recovered from its pacifist fantasies. Even the Opposition which is perpetually pestering the Government to go to war has realised that Crusades need weapons. A completely wrong construction was put on the general feeling of the nation by the disastrous peace ballot. The number of those who took part in it shook the nerves of the Government and, instead of frankly stating the problem and steadying the nation, our rulers meekly followed in the wake of what for the moment seemed to them to be an overwhelming wave of pacifist extremism. For those errors we have to pay to-day, and the bill is far larger than it would have been but for past inaction. Navy, Air Force and Army have all been allowed to fall below safety level, and nothing is more expensive than a sudden burst of repentant energy. Not only has the security of the British Empire been endangered, but our fantasies have involved the whole of Europe in a crisis of impending war.

A British Empire armed as it can afford to be, is the only barrier against war. The international trouble in Spain would never have arisen if Great Britain had been strong enough to take her due

part in the councils of Europe. The agitation of Dictators would have been checked by the knowledge that what this country said, she meant. Our weakness in the past has led to shilly-shallying and our prestige, most valuable of our assets, had sunk to a very low level, when the authorities at last woke up and decided that something must be done. Now, at least, our friends have the satisfaction of seeing the country united in its determination to regain its proper strength. The only serious criticisms that the Government will have to face are concerned with the speed and efficiency with which our Defence plans are being carried out. Necessarily the progress that has been made is a matter of speculation among the general public. In the country's interest full details cannot be given to the world. In many quarters there are grave misgivings, and only experience can show whether Sir Thomas Inskip has succeeded in co-ordinating all our resources to re-establish the lead which ought never to have been lost. The policy to be followed should be thrashed out fully in Parliament.

There is much to be said in favour of a single Ministry of Defence, for nothing can be more hostile to national security than friction and rivalry between the three departments. The questions of the relations between Navy, Air Force and Army raise very difficult problems, on which our experts differ. The dependence of the Fleet Air Arm on the Air Ministry has many critics and it might seem that at sea naval and aerial considerations are so closely intertwined that complete unity in preparation and control is needed. The exact function of our Army is a matter that needs a carefully thought-out policy. One thing is certain, development of our armaments must be accelerated, and slowness in its pursuit will be nothing short of criminal.

On the Continent, there are many who believe that 1937 is a fatal year. A French weekly, usually well-informed, states that at the end of this year Germany will have an army of 1,250,000 men, against which France can only set 650,000 men in the field, but there is reason to suppose that the German *matériel* has proved disappointing and, what is still more important, the training of the troops and the use of machines of war leaves much to be desired. Events in Spain have shown that the superiority on which Hitler counted has not been realised, particularly in the important department of aviation. Our friendship with France has been announced to all the world, and mutual guarantees against aggression have been exchanged. The "Gentleman's Agreement" with Italy marks a step forward for the maintenance of peace in the Mediterranean. If Great Britain is strong enough there will be no war. Our French friends believe that within a year we shall have attained the necessary strength, but there is some little doubt about the coming months. Facts seem to show that sufficient has already been done to give pause to would-be disturbers of the peace. Presumably no one in Europe wants war if it can be avoided, but a great gulf is fixed between professions of peace and the will to ensure it. There is a manifest contradiction in the attitude of certain



rulers who cry to the heavens that there is no space for the existing population of their countries within their borders and at the same time encourage by every means in their power the increase of that population, unless they purpose to carve out with the swords outlets for their overflowing people.

The concentration of the entire resources of the State on a possible war leads to an internal strain which can, in certain events, only be relieved by foreign adventure. In the recent past our foreign policy has wobbled and shilly-shallied mainly because it was not backed by adequate force of arms. The only hope for the future is that it should dismiss all hesitation, fortified by the knowledge that the strength of the nation, duly organised and prepared, is behind it. The sums that Parliament will vote to achieve this end, will be grudged by no sensible citizen.

In his speech in the House of Commons on Tuesday Mr. Eden appealed to Germany, remarking very truly that the part she is to play in Europe is the main preoccupation of all Europe to-day. His appeal can have no weight if it is not backed by our strong right arm. Let us be content to secure the immediate future. We may well be satisfied if we can secure peace in our time. Already an irrational quest for eternal peace which could only be achieved by a universal change of heart has brought us drugged by seductive fantasies to the verge of the precipice of 1914. Let us retrace our steps towards safety, with our heads among the stars, but with our feet at least on solid earth.

## ABRACADABRA

**S**URELY some of us must feel from time to time that when the next person utters the word "ideology" we shall, if the word is in print, scream loudly, dash round the room on all fours, or stand on our heads. It is unfortunate that the miserable word is nearly always in print and seldom spoken, because, if the word were spoken, we could quite simply sock its utterer in the jaw.

Ideology is the latest of a pestilent brood of jargon. This word and the rest of the litter are responsible for half the loose and muddled thinking which is responsible for half the confusions of the semi-civilised world. Very few of those who read even the most respectable newspapers and/or take part in Parliamentary debate know what ideology means. It means "the science of ideas." It also means "visionary opinions." But it does not stop at this; it does not even stop at "conflicting ideologies"; it becomes "ideological attitudes" or even "ideological ideas."

This new and alien importation was only made necessary by the fact that the public mind had grown too used to the word "implement." Indeed the public had almost begun to realise that when you said "implement" you might just as well have used plain English and said "fulfil" or "accomplish." So it may be supposed that the junta (another resplendent foreigner) which sits somewhere in the House of Commons to manufacture verbal monstrosities, and which may be

imagined as having a defensive and certainly offensive alliance with the mysterious society of amalgamated nitwits which manufactures obscene jests and limericks in the dungeons of the Stock Exchange—so it may be supposed that this junta turned up the letter "I" in the dictionary and discovered "ideology." Why go so far? Why not have stopped at the word "implant"? That would have sounded splendid if only Mr. Asquith had known about it in 1914. "We shall not implant the sword until . . ." Poor wretched man, who merely talked English like a scholar and an orator, he could only think of the word "sheathe," and so the War dragged on for more than four years.

Or come, there is another word which would be very useful to Mr. Eden and his foreign policy. There is the word "impetrate." It means "to obtain by request or entreaty." Quite close to it there is a most useful word "imperscriptible." And we have not heard very much of "impeditive" (which is perhaps too easy) or even of "idiopathy." But it is not for ordinary Englishmen to help the junta out of its difficulties. They have the whole dictionary with which to play about and the extraordinary thing is that, with all this wealth of Greco-Italian and Germanic bastardry to play with, their output should be so exiguous.

Careful research has revealed the fact that this conspiracy to confuse the public mind began in Parliament when someone, whose identity is still obscure, invented an "ad hoc committee." Ahasuerus Snooks, M.P. (there are some who contend that it was not Snooks but Tremblebobble, and, as has been said, the point is not yet sufficiently clear) could perfectly well have moved for the appointment of a committee "with reference to this matter." But he was a genius. He knew that if he called his committee "ad hoc" he would strike a blow for all the dilatory and feeble absurdities of successive governments of all parties and take his place in history as one of the chief assassins who have bumped off the English language.

Snooks, of course, had his imitators and followers. One of them gave us the "datum line" by which great numbers of protesting miners and a considerable number of unsatisfied coal-owners were induced to bring to an end a strike of which they were all tired. Since then there has been the personal triumph of a famous Labour leader who reduced a critical audience to tears of maudling pity by telling them of the heroism with which he had come to address them in spite of the fact that, on that very morning, he had undergone the operation—and here he rolled the words round his tongue with a horrified intensity—of "vibro massage." Then, of course, there is the gentleman who drives our car and is called a "chauffeur."

But that is nothing. That is merely a little froth like the French hostess who used to ask us to "five o'clocker à quatres heures." These things do not affect the destinies of Europe. They do not set fleets and armies on the move and fill God's wholesome air with the sound of tearing calico as bombs are dropped on the wretched peoples who only want to be left alive. They do not prevent ordinary people who elect members of Parliament

from understanding the speeches of Ministers of State. They do not drive an electorate into crazy courses on a wave of sentimentalism and a want of understanding.

The bastard words and phrases which disfigure the public speeches of to-day do have these effects. They distort meanings and conceal intentions. It is time to set up a secret society for the rescue of poor plain English. G.C.P.

## A LEGIONARY ON LEAVE

OF all the words in the soldier's vocabulary there is surely none to compare with "leave" or "furlough." Those of the B.E.F. know the effect produced by the very mention of it—hope, then anticipation, postponement and, finally, on the day of departure the exultation and intoxicating excitement at the thought of going home, if only for a brief spell! For the *Légionnaire*, however, "home" leave does not exist and, in fact, previous to 1918 leave of any description was non-existent unless he chose to spend it in barracks at the Regimental Dépôt—a busman's holiday, indeed, which really amounted to a sort of glorified and extended "excused duty."

The late Maréchal Lyautey was called the "Friend of the *Légionnaire*," a title which he justly deserved. Madame Lyautey, when she first came to Morocco with her husband, adopted us and glories in her sobriquet of "Mother of the Legion." She soon diagnosed the cause of so much of the *cafard* to which the *Légionnaire* is prone—nostalgia—when, broken and tired after several long and strenuous campaigns or arduous work in the "bled," he felt the need of a rest away from the environment of his regimental life to restore his morale and his health. He could not leave French territory, and leave in barracks was a very negative kind of furlough, and so in 1913 she founded the Maison de Convalescence at Salé.

In its beginning this convalescent camp catered for those who, admitted to hospital owing to wounds or sickness, on their discharge were not sufficiently restored to health to enable them to undertake fully their regimental duties. By 1918, thanks to Madame Lyautey's untiring efforts and the assistance of her husband, a leave camp had been added to the convalescent camp for those entitled to furlough and, like Popsy, it "grew" and has continued growing ever since. The number of days of convalescence or leave spent in 1913 were 417; in 1918 they were 16,359, and in 1935 more than 60,000.

Roughly speaking a *Légionnaire* in Morocco, provided that he has a fairly clean sheet, can apply for thirty days' leave for every three years spent in the country. From October until May there is a steady stream of arrivals and departures, and as the seaside climate of Salé—across the river from Rabat—is equitable, with occasional rain in February or March, quite a decent time can be spent there provided funds are good, and if they aren't, well, there's always "tick" at the Foyer until pay-day. *Carpe diem!*

At Salé the old "swaddy" is sure of meeting someone whom he may have seen last in Indo-China, Syria or any of the other outlandish spots where the Legion serves. A slap on the back, a handshake, hurried questions as to where he has been since the old days and which Regiment he is serving with now, cut short by the inevitable Legion invitation, "Mais avant tout, mon vieux, viens au Foyer pour boire un litre!"

There, seated on either side of a table on which stands a bottle of "pinard" and a couple of glasses one delves into the past to re-live old campaigns and marches, breaking off from time to time to ask about old comrades. One learns that some have joined the 6th Regiment (a euphemistic Legion expression corresponding to "gone west"), others have been invalided out of the service, and so on. The Legion is, or was, renowned for its camaraderie. *Tempora mutantur*, but among the old soldiers that camaraderie still exists and nowhere is it to be seen to greater advantage than at Salé.

There is a permanent staff at Salé, drawn from all three regiments serving in Morocco, who ensure the running of the camp. Naturally discipline exists, but it is reduced to a minimum; and unless the permissionnaire commits a grave breach of discipline he is free to enjoy himself with very few restrictions. He reports himself once every twenty-four hours at 7 a.m., and in the intervening time is free to go where he likes within a reasonable limit.

Not only to get a glimpse of the sea again, but actually to be able to bathe in, or lounge for hours beside it! What that means to us can only be fully understood by those who have spent years on end in desert, mountain or "bled." Parties are formed to go shell-fishing on the rocks when the tide is out. Back in camp with full haversacks the shell-fish are scraped, cleaned and boiled in a bucket ("scrounged," heaven knows where) over a fire in an adjoining field, and washed down with the inevitable "pinard." A vegetable garden covering several acres, a small herd of cows, twenty to thirty pigs, hens, ducks and geese help to make the camp self-supporting to a certain extent. The rooms are large, airy and tiled. There is a library and a reading-room for the studios, but they are not much patronised.

On Armistice Day and on April 30th—the day on which the Legion commemorate the immortal stand at Camerone in Mexico in the 'sixties—Madame Lyautey visits the home in person, the home which owes its very existence to her forethought and devotion. The *Légionnaire* is not given to effusiveness, but the welcome reserved for her is an exceptional one and her heart must surely rejoice as she realises that she has not striven in vain and that her work is good.

Alas! Thirty, sixty or ninety days' leave like all other good things must come to an end and the day of departure draws all too soon. Down to the station with a bunch of old friends to see one off. A handshake all round and into a compartment. Through the window comes a bunch of flowers ("won" from the O.C.'s garden) from one fellow,

cigarettes or tobacco from another, a casse-croute from a third and a bottle of "pinard pour la route" from a fourth. The train draws quickly out and round the bend, carrying back to his Regimental Dépôt one who has enjoyed for a brief spell a break in the routine of his Legion life. God bless Madame la Maréchale!

## PLAYTIME

IT was a lovely summer evening, neither too hot nor too cool. Down in the water meadows the cows were grazing or lying and placidly chewing the cud. The air was full of the strong, minty tang of bruised rushes. Above the surface of the river danced myriads of tiny insects and every now and then the surface would be broken by a ripple as a hungry trout rose to suck in an unwary fly. If one stood still for a moment one could hear the excited squeaks of the voles as they scrambled about in the tangled roots of the pollard willows which lined the river bank. High in the blue of the sky hung a single kestrel on the watch for movement in the grass below him which would betoken the passing of a mouse. Even as I watched he closed his wings and dropped like a stone; only when he was within ten feet of the ground did he open his wings to check that head-long fall. When he rose again something small was gripped in his talons. Blackbirds were darting furtively about and uttering their peculiar evening cry of "tink, tink, tink." Close to the hawthorn hedges rabbits were feeding, and as I passed a gap I saw a streak of red disappear on the opposite side of the field. Charles James Fox was also on the prowl, and I wished him luck in his hunting.

But it was none of these things that I had come to see. My quarry was shyer by far and much more difficult to watch. One unwary step, one breath of wind the wrong way, and I should see nothing, for the otters are always on the watch for danger, especially when they have cubs. Four times I had been to the river and waited for many hours, but each time I had been unlucky. That they were there I was certain, for I had seen their little star-like tracks, but the creatures themselves were as elusive as woodcocks.

Cautiously I crept along the bank, keeping close to the shelter of the willows. Save for the whisper of the water when a fish rose, all was quiet. I could clearly hear the noise of the traffic on the road two miles away. Very slowly I went forward until at last I reached my objective. This was an old willow whose pollarded top had been hollowed by rain and weather until it provided as snug a hiding place as one could wish. I climbed the sloping trunk and settled myself inside the cup-like top. Opposite to me the river bank sloped sharply to the water. There was something odd about that bank for it was worn and slippery, as though many little feet had passed down it. It was for all the world like a chute, for a smooth channel or groove had been worn in the grass until it was as slippery and level as a boy's slide. And a slide it was, for this was where the otters came to play the ancient game that otters have played since the world was young.

For a long time I crouched in that tree-top. I was cramped and aching, but I dared not move for even at that moment a pair of shy, dark eyes might

have been on the watch. Small birds perched in the branches above me and voles and water rats played in the banks below. Once a late heron came sprawling across the sky on his way home. The evening wore on. It would soon be dark and I had seen nothing. I began to give up hope.

But, suddenly, something appeared above the surface of the water. It was the head of an otter. I could see the watchful, suspicious eyes and the short bristling whiskers. So swiftly had he come that for a moment I thought that my eyes were deceiving me. He broke the surface without one ripple to give warning of his coming. For what seemed an age the blunt flat head remained there while the otter made sure that all was safe. Then, as unexpectedly as he had come, he disappeared. But only for a moment, for I caught sight of a squat figure landing on the opposite bank. Then there was silence for a minute. A long fluting whistle rang down the river; the otter was summoning his family. Where they came from I do not know, but as soon as that whistle sounded there were five more otters on the river bank, a bitch and four cubs. Perhaps they had been hiding in the rushes or perhaps they had been sheltering under the bank. At the call of their lord and master they were instantly in the open.

Then began a time of play which I shall never forget. The old dog otter ran to the slide, spread out his short legs and hurtled down into the water. That was the signal for playtime to begin. The cubs rolled down the chute in a tumbling mass. Scarcely had they reached the water than they had climbed the bank to slide down again. Over and over they went like little kittens, gurgling and snorting in their glee. Their parents, too, joined in the fun, but in a more restrained way. It seemed that all caution had been cast aside as they romped in the twilight. Two of the cubs had a trick of their own. They would begin to slide down together, then one would cannon into the other and they would finish up in a tangled mass of gleaming fur. There seemed to be no other game than this sliding down the run into the water. But how they enjoyed it! It was difficult to believe that these joyous creatures were the shy and wary otters of the daylight. Even the old dog romped with as much abandon as his offspring. One peculiar thing I noticed was that they were not silent. The air was loud with their grunts of pleasure and the mock worrying of the cubs. They splashed into the water as though they did not care who heard them. But I was soon to find that they were still alert to the slightest sign of danger.

I was so enthralled by the sight that I shifted my position to get a better view. I swear that I made no sound, nor did I show myself. But no sooner had I moved than the harsh alarm call rang out and in a trice the river bank was deserted. I did not see them go nor did I hear them. They just melted away into the gloom of the twilight. I climbed down from my tree and set off for home, for I knew that I should see no more. I have seen many strange and memorable things among the wild creatures, but I have seen nothing more lovely than the sight of that otter family playing at dusk on the lonely river bank.

DAN RUSSELL.



## Books of To-day

### THE CHANGING EAST

THE ancients were fond of personifying their famous rivers, and poets down the centuries have held to the tradition. Moreover it does not require much stretch of the imagination to find in the course of a great river certain analogies to human existence. Hence Herr Emil Ludwig has every reason to feel that he was justified in treating the Nile as another of those heroes whose life-stories deserve to be recorded in glowing and colourful language ("The Nile," translated by Mary H. Lindsay, Allen & Unwin, illustrated, 16s.).

The image of a river, he tells us, has always been present in his mind when he has been writing the life of a great man, and the inversion of the mental process doubtless comes very easily to him. There are obvious difficulties in keeping up the personification, but Herr Ludwig skilfully evades them or covers them up with a wealth of symbolic metaphor. One of his objects, as he expresses it, is "to paint in colours what the expert presents in figures and tables," and it is amazing how much geological, biological, political and historical detail in the Nile's story he manages to convey in his pictorial writing. The Nile to him is, like Napoleon, a veritable child of Destiny; it is "the greatest single stream on earth," and there is a heroic element in its early battles and in its final emergence as the Great Fertilizer of desert lands.

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The Italo-Abyssinian war has been the theme of several recent books, but none of these has offered an entirely satisfactory explanation of the somewhat speedy collapse of Abyssinian resistance to the invader. In a terrain so favourable to guerrilla warfare as the mountainous regions of Abyssinia unquestionably were, and with a people by no means lacking in courage and fighting ability, it might have been thought that the resistance would have been far more stubborn and effective than it actually proved to be. Mr. G. L. Steer, who was *The Times'* correspondent in Abyssinia, in his "Caesar in Abyssinia" (Hodder & Stoughton, 12s. 6d.) gives us what is probably the correct solution of the mystery.

The Abyssinian armies were, he says, composed of men brought from all parts of the country. Large numbers of them were unfamiliar with the particular locality in which they were fighting. They had no under-officers or N.C.O.'s to keep them in hand, their sole discipline being their attachment to their feudal chiefs. When touch was lost with these chiefs all control was apt to vanish, and by scattering concentrations by day and rendering movement except by night impossible or dangerous the ubiquitous and ever-vigilant Italian air force played a very decisive part in the war. Italian command of the air, in fact, deprived the Abyssinians of one of their main assets and one of the essentials of successful

guerrilla warfare, the mobility without which there is little chance of surprise.

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To most people the capture of Baghdad by General Maude put *finis* to the Mesopotamian Campaign. As a matter of historical and military fact, the operations that ensued in this theatre of war after Maude's triumphal arrival in Baghdad were of considerable importance. The Turks had suffered a serious blow, but they had retired to lick their wounds and recover. Maude's first object was to drive them back sufficiently far so that they should no longer be a menace to Baghdad. Then he, and Marshall after his death, endeavoured to trap the Turks into a net formed by the British on the south and the Russians supposed to be advancing from the north-east. Finally, when the Russian advance failed to materialise, came Marshall's "sweeping" operations up the Diyala, Tigris and Euphrates.

Comprising as it did a series of minor campaigns full of tactical and strategic lessons, this last phase of the Mesopotamian struggle has a special interest for the military student, and Lieut.-Colonel A. H. Burne's account of it ("Mesopotamia: The Last Phase," Gale & Polden, with sketch maps, 5s.) has the merit of being both lucidly and attractively written.

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In this year falls the centenary of Pushkin's death, a literary anniversary that is sure to evoke tremendous enthusiasm in Russia, where there never has been any doubt regarding his claims to transcending genius. Translations of Pushkin's poetry into English have lamentably failed to establish those claims, and unless one can read Pushkin in Russian one is compelled to take his literary gifts more or less on trust. But to the Russians Pushkin is not only their greatest poet; he also deserves a place among the world's "immortals."

This was an appropriate moment for a full-length portrait of Pushkin and a serious attempt to arrive at a just appreciation of his work as a poet. Instead, Mr. James Cleugh has been content to give us a sort of imaginative biography built up from "scenes from the life of Alexander Sergeyevitch Pushkin." He calls this "Prelude to Parnassus" (Barker, 10s. 6d.), but leaves his reader to discover for himself how Parnassus ever came into the picture. The libertine that Pushkin was is very much there, but not the poet. Mr. Cleugh knows how to write and his "scenes" on the whole, if not perhaps always historically accurate, are well done. One could have wished that he had utilised his unquestionable talents in producing a more serious study of the Russian poet.

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One doubts whether there could be any man better qualified to deal with all the legal, forensic and human aspects of that truly colossal *cause célèbre*, the Tichborne case, than Lord Maugham; and since that case, with all its varied sensational developments, occupied the Courts for some seven years, Lord Maugham's singularly clear and

illuminating method of handling it can only excite his readers' respectful admiration. It is an extremely fascinating tale, as Lord Maugham tells it ("The Tichborne Case," Hodder & Stoughton, 15s.).

## NEW NOVELS

This is an age of the large-scale novel and of Sagas that run into two or more volumes. And it is the not unnatural ambition of the writer, who takes himself and his art seriously and who feels that he has the gift for interpreting his own times or an important era in history, to settle down some day to the evolution of a grand theme worthy of his powers without the hampering shackles of restricted space.

Mr. Compton Mackenzie, in his dedicatory introduction to "The East Wind of Love" (Rich and Cowan, 8s. 6d.), confesses that he has long cherished some such ambition, but circumstances have proved unfavourable: either the foundations he had begun laying were inadequate for the "edifice" that was taking form in his mind or Fate in the shape of "offended authorities" intervened to cut short what he had designed. Despite this discouragement and the feeling that he may be "inviting fortune's mischief by setting out to build yet again a work in successive volumes," and notwithstanding his own admitted prejudice, after five years of reviewing, against "very long books," he has found himself unable to resist the urge to the production of a *magnum opus*.

"The East Wind of Love" (628 pages) is to be the first of four volumes comprising "The Four Winds of Love" and covering a period of thirty-five years from the beginning of the present century. In the course of this tetralogy four public schoolboys are to pass from youth to full maturity, and in setting out their lives, loves, adventures, hopes, achievements and disappointments Mr. Compton Mackenzie is to present us with his own mirror to view the age. Till the whole work is completed it is only fair to Mr. Compton Mackenzie to reserve judgment regarding his general design and to confine comment to the volume actually published. Of this it may be said that it has many excellencies and but one grievous fault. The precocious prattlings of schoolboys on high politics strike an unreal note and the persistence of debate in the book is apt to become somewhat wearisome. Apart from this one has no reason to regret the length of this first volume.

When a book has received the America-France Award one may at least be sure of its outstanding literary quality. That quality is retained in Mr. James Whittall's able translation of Madame Monique Saint-Helier's novel—"The Abandoned Wood" (Selwyn and Blount). It is an unusual tale, revealing a delicate, almost spiritual insight into the dark depths of character stirred by tragedy and hardship. Not to everyone's taste perhaps, but a fine book nonetheless.

"Death Meets The Coroner," by John Knox Ryland (Stanley Paul), introduces us to a very human Detective Inspector who exhibits sound judgment and patience in treading his way through the many surprising complications arising out of his investigation of a really baffling mystery.

## OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

"Great Farmers," by Professor T. A. Scott Watson and Mary Elliot Hobbs (profusely illustrated, Selwyn & Blount, 12/6); "The Stroke of Murder" (four famous crime cases by Winifred Duke, Robert Hale, 10/6); "King-Hall Survey 1936" (Newnes, 6/-); "Personality and other Essays" by James Scott (Richards, 5/-); "Photographs of the Year" (Annual Review of the World's Pictorial Photographic Work), edited by E. J. Mortimer (Iliffe & Sons, 5/-).

Novels: "Adam of a New World," by Jack Lindsay (Ivor Nicholson & Watson); "Satan's Drome," by William Reeves (Robert Hale); "Extenuating Circumstances," by Elizabeth Nisot (Stanley Paul); "Rivers Run to the Sea," by Rinaldo William Armstrong (Stockwell, 7/6).

## PUBLISHERS' PLANS

Several notable books will be appearing shortly:—"Marshal Ney," by Piers Compton (Methuen), Jan. 28; "Prince Ito," by Kengi Hamada (Allen and Unwin), Jan. 26; "Lord Bothwell"—the first English biography—by Robert Gore-Browne (Collins), Jan. 25; "Westminster Abbey: The Empire's Crown," by Rev. Jocelyn Perkins, Sacrist of the Abbey (Duckworth), end of Jan.; "The Crown of England," by the Hon. Ruairaidh Erskine of Marr (Dent), in February; "Edward VIII, His Life and Reign," by Hector Bolitho (Eyre and Spottiswoode), March 18.

## Epics of the Prairies

are to be found in the lives of the clergy in Western Canada.

With meagre reduced salaries, amidst daily anxieties, these men face sacrifice and suffering unflinchingly, for the sake of the extension of the Kingdom of God. Some parishes cover an area of over one thousand square miles.

Such heroes are worthy of all possible assistance from church people in the homeland.

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**THE COLONIAL AND CONTINENTAL CHURCH SOCIETY**  
9, Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4



## Round the Empire

### IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

THE Empire's thoughts are already turning towards the Coronation and the Imperial Conference that is to follow immediately after the ceremony in the Abbey. There is a growing feeling, too, that this Conference is likely to be a more than usually important one, not only setting its seal on another Ottawa, but in other directions also affording indications of increasing Imperial solidarity and understanding.

So far as the trade agreements are concerned there has, of course, already been a great deal of preliminary work in the way of settling the principles and even some of the major details for amended Pacts. In some cases, as, for example, that of the Canadian agreement with us, there will be little left to do beyond attaching signatures to formal documents. In other cases the progress has been from all accounts somewhat slower, and points over which there is still disagreement may involve further exploration and discussion. It has to be remembered, too, that the trade and other discussions are not confined to those between the Mother Country on the one hand and the Dominions on the other. The meeting between Imperial statesmen also serves to provide an effective clearing-house for all manner of problems affecting the relations of the Dominions with one another and with other parts of the Empire.

#### DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Dominions have already followed the National Government's example in increasing their armaments, and it is not without significance that both the Commonwealth and Canadian delegations will include, besides the Prime Ministers, their respective Defence Ministers. Australia, with its vast coastline, its somewhat scanty population, and its generally exposed position, has for several years been much concerned with problems of Defence, and its allocation of funds for this purpose has been on a considerably larger scale than the similar votes of other Dominions. Canada has never had the same cause for apprehensions and its remoteness from the scene of possible hostilities might well have seemed to justify the economy it has practised so diligently in its expenditure on armaments. None the less, even the present Liberal Government have decided to make a substantial increase in the Defence Estimates, most of the additional expenditure going towards the strengthening of the Royal Canadian Air Force and to the mechanisation of units of the territorial militia. The South African Defence Minister expounded some strange doctrines on Dominion neutrality early in 1936, but August last found him in London in close contact with British military experts, and there is reason to hope that his ideas suffered a beneficial sea change.

Imperial Defence will certainly loom large in the coming Conference, and it may be that the discussions and the disclosures by Home Ministers

and their military advisers will help to dissipate some of the fallacies, illusions, prejudices and, perhaps one should add, not unnatural hesitations, that stand in the way of a perfect Imperial accord in ensuring through the firmly established security of the whole Empire the peace of the world. Whitehall has shown an ever-increasing readiness to consult Dominion opinion at moments of crisis in international affairs, and this attitude has not only been warmly welcomed but has pointed the road to possible further developments whereby Imperial unity may result in the general acceptance of a common policy to the outside world. This ideal is not so far-fetched as it might appear, since the whole Empire is actuated by the one desire to preserve peace among the nations.

That charter of absolute freedom and independence, the Statute of Westminster, has in the years that have passed had its deleterious effects on the Imperial body politic, but the consequences have not been so grave as prophets of evil predicted they would be. Some of the Dominions have made no attempt to adopt it and have ignored its implications; others have used the freedom conferred sparingly and with caution. An instance of Dominion reluctance to exercise undoubted constitutional rights was afforded this week by the Union Government's refusal to agree to a Bill abolishing appeals from South Africa to the Privy Council, even though, in the words of General Smuts, the Judicial Committee was "not an ideal appeal body." Mr. de Valera has gone much further than any other Dominion statesman in the steps he has taken to vindicate the independence of the Free State. But he, too, apparently has begun to realise that complete independence leads to an uncomfortable and dangerous isolation.

#### NEW EPOCH FOR INDIA

This may possibly be the last Conference in which India is to have the familiar triple representation of Secretary of State, an Indian Prince and a representative of British India. The last Government of India Act has placed her well on the road to Dominion status—if one may use a term that is capable of more than one meaning. There may be, of course, serious set-backs to her progress along that road: with an electorate of 28 millions, largely illiterate, with fierce communal antagonisms always ready to break out and with political organisation apart from an anti-Imperialist Congress singularly lacking, things may not turn out quite as India's friends hope. But if all goes well and in due course Federated India comes into being—and already with the appointment of Federal Justices, as the Princes have begun to realise, that (so far as Britain's intentions are concerned) is no distant prospect, perhaps the Colonies may step into India's present place at the Imperial Council board and have special representatives to assist the Secretary of State in putting forward Colonial views. With the Mandate question still a lively one, from all appearances, such a development might well have had advantages on the present occasion, since it would have indicated, in unmistakable fashion, the Colonial Office's anxiety to give full weight to British East African opinion. Of course, it may

be argued that the Colonial Office having once set the precedent, it would be always necessary to follow it and that occasions might arise when it would be difficult to appoint, say, a couple of non-official "assessors" without causing offence or disappointment in one or other of the many Colonies under the sway of Whitehall. Such an argument need not be taken seriously. The Colonial Office should easily be able to decide long before the Conference assembles what part of the Colonial Empire ought to be represented.

#### SELF-HELP FOR WOOL INDUSTRY

IT is gratifying to learn that the Inter-Dominion Wool Conference in Melbourne, at which South African, New Zealand and Australian wool interests were represented, has decided to create an "international wool promotion fund." It has been apparent for some years that such a fund, probably administered from headquarters in London, was required to enable wool to counter the challenge of artificial substitutes.

When Sir Henry Gullett, Australian Minister in Charge of Trade Treaties, was in London last year, he recognised the urgency of the need and drew attention to it by means of outspoken comments which spurred the woolgrowers of the Empire from their lethargy. In Australia his words fell on such fertile ground that the industry, by a voluntary levy, has already provided £50,000 towards the organisation of overseas publicity and marketing facilities. Evidently other wool-producing Dominions are following this lead.

It is now the duty of British wool interests to contribute to the scheme by carrying out their promise to make a yearly grant of £50,000 towards a fund raised throughout the Empire. It should be recognised that this is a scheme which concerns the prosperity of the British Commonwealth as a whole, not merely the prosperity of one, two or three of its component parts. As such, it is the business of the whole British Commonwealth to ensure its success. The wool industry is experiencing an era of fine prosperity. It can afford to help itself to meet the menace of synthetic competition.

#### ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN TRADE AGREEMENT

Australia, like the rest of the Empire, has been busy "revising Ottawa." In some respects, the operation of the Agreement made then has not benefited Australia as greatly as its most ardent admirers had hoped, though everyone agrees that it has been a valuable stimulant to Anglo-Australian trade. For example, since it came into force Australian exports to Great Britain have increased as follows: Canned fruits by 100 per cent.; dairy produce by 70 per cent.; dried fruits by 40 per cent. Nor must it be thought that the Agreement has helped Australia only. British trade has also reaped an advantage to the tune of some millions of pounds.

One point over which Australian dissatisfaction is expressed is in regard to Section 10. This section states that Australian protective duties "shall not exceed such a level as will give producers in the United Kingdom full opportunity of

reasonable competition on the basis of the relative costs of economical and efficient production." Some British manufacturers have interpreted this to mean that Australia is obliged to calculate its tariffs so as to ensure that British goods shall compete with Australian on equal terms. It is too much to expect that Australia will concede such a vital point. Any Australian Government which did concede it would certainly enjoy short shrift at the hands of the electors.

There is little doubt that the Australian Government will insist on greater clarity on this and other points of the Ottawa Agreement. Such an attitude will certainly not imply that Australia is dissatisfied with the ideal of Imperial trading preference. It will mean merely that she is observing the principles on which, all along, her political leaders have felt that such an ideal could be translated into practical accomplishment. The Australian view is that preference to home-produced goods must come first, preference to Empire goods second. It is a healthy view and, if the discussions at the Imperial Conference culminate in its acceptance by the representatives of all parts of the Empire, that Conference will have earned Australian gratitude.

#### WAR AGAINST LOCUSTS

Since 1920 the Union Government has spent nearly £3,000,000 on locust destruction. Over £1,600,000 of this sum was spent during the two years 1933-34 and 1934-35. Dr. P. R. Viljoen, Union Secretary for Agriculture and Forestry, quotes these figures in his annual report for 1935-36, which has just been published. The figures show that it was only in six years that unusually large amounts were spent. The record expenditure in any one year was incurred in 1934-35, when the figure was £949,681. In 1933-34 it was £693,000; in 1924-25, £377,000; in 1923-24, £325,000, and in 1935-36 it was £142,000.

#### INDIA'S ELECTIONS

Never have politics played such a part in India's history as they are to play this and next month. Not far short of a tenth of the whole country's vast population is to be now "politically-minded," for there are to be close on thirty million electors for the 1,500 odd provincial seats to be filled. Of this number of electors about one-sixth are to be women, so rapid has been the stride of the weaker sex in these last few years towards political power as represented by the right to vote.

With by far the major portion of the electorate completely illiterate, electoral signs have naturally had to be employed on a large scale to help the voter when he comes to record his vote to put his mark against the candidate he wants to select. India being a pre-eminently agricultural country, these signs are naturally mainly agricultural, and there has been hot competition among the candidates in certain areas to secure for themselves particular signs which are likely to have special appeal to the ignorant masses.

Except for Congress and possibly the Liberals, there is no political organisation that claims to cover the whole country. The Congress is running

a fierce anti-Imperialist campaign in every province and hopes at last to live up to its National claims by capturing the masses. But it is by no means so certain that its hopes will be realised. The result of the elections will be awaited with interest not unmixed with anxiety by those who are looking forward to India taking her place at no great distance of time as a full partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

## Forgotten Deeds

WE are so accustomed to think of South Africa as a great Dominion of the British Empire that we often forget how comparatively recent it is since men of British stock have been settled in the sub-continent and fail to realise that it is only a little more than a century since any part of South Africa was occupied by white men beyond the actual neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope and the region immediately behind it. The Dutch first occupied the Cape in 1652 under Jan van Riebeeck as a refreshment station for their ships on their way to and from the trading posts of the Netherlands East India Company in the East Indies. For a century and a half the importance of the Cape of Good Hope was only strategical and the number of white men in the colony was comparatively small. Not only Dutch but also French and British ships made Cape Town a port of call on their East Indian voyages, and this brought considerable prosperity to the town. It was the only centre of population of any size in the colony, but it was a very pleasant place with a constant coming and going of visitors, and its culture and social life were often commented upon by passing travellers in the eighteenth century.

The Dutch population in the interior of the colony away from the capital led a much more primitive life, and they had little liking for the Company's officials who resided at the seat of government and whom they found oppressive and exacting in their regulations and interference. The country folk or Boers were cattle farmers who lived a semi-patriarchal life on their grazing grounds and added to the produce of their herds by their hunting of the antelopes and other game which then abounded. In time of peace they had few opportunities of selling their produce at a profit, but in time of war, when French and British fleets were frequently calling at the neutral port of Cape Town, the frontier Boers would send down more of their beasts with every prospect of getting good prices, and the whole colony reached a higher level of prosperity. But the harbour of Cape Town was a source of very serious danger to English commerce from the shelter and sustenance it offered to French privateers who preyed upon our East Indiamen, and we suffered so badly from them during the war of the American Revolution that when war broke out again in 1793 our Government determined that for the sake of the safety of our route to India the Cape must be secured.

The opportunity came when the French Republican armies overran Holland in 1795, and a British force was sent to occupy Cape Town and

hold it on behalf of the Prince of Orange. But the occupation was purely strategical, and no British people went to the colony save the soldiers and a handful of officials. When a precarious peace was patched up in the Treaty of Amiens, the Cape Colony was handed back to the Dutch Republic, but the arrangement did not last, for war broke out again and a fresh military force was sent to renew the occupation in 1806 and thenceforward down to the end of the war British military Governors ruled at the Cape and administered the government of the Dutch colonists in much more liberal fashion than they had been accustomed to during the rule of the Netherlands East India Company. No Englishmen but officials and soldiers, however, went to the colony, although all through the second military occupation it was planned to take over the Cape permanently.

In 1815 the position was regularised and Holland ceded Cape Colony to Great Britain in full sovereignty, but meanwhile a new and serious danger appeared to threaten its peace. By that time the frontier farmers had spread in their wanderings in search of fresh pastures as far eastwards as the Great Fish River, some 250 miles from Cape Town, and there they came into contact with black Kaffir tribes coming down from the north-east, who were also in search of good cattle land. The negroes were a much stronger and more dangerous enemy than the brown Hottentots, whom the farmers had alone met before in their wanderings and whom they had brought into subjection without much fighting. But the Kaffirs stoutly contested the lands about the Great Fish River with the Boers, and the British Governors at Cape Town had to consider seriously the resulting dangers on the eastern frontier, as it was called, and had to send up regular troops to prevent an invasion of the colony by the Kaffirs in force. The policy to be adopted to protect the frontier was a subject of serious discussion between the Governor and the Cabinet in London, and ultimately it led to a decision of vital importance to South Africa and the Empire.

When the Napoleonic wars came to an end in 1815, they left a very serious legacy of unemployment and distress in Great Britain, and there were practically no organised means of alleviating the suffering and semi-starvation of large masses of the people. During the eighteenth century emigration was strongly discouraged by the Government as tending to deprive the country of one of its principal sources of wealth in a plentiful labour supply. The emigrants who had gone to people the British colonies in America had largely come from the Continent of Europe and had included few Englishmen, but now a complete change of policy began. From 1815 onwards social reformers started to work out plans for sending destitute labourers to the colonies and assisting people of a better class to emigrate if they wished. It was the combination of ideas such as these, with the desire to build up a strong buffer along the Eastern Frontier of Cape Colony, that led to the first Government-assisted emigration scheme in 1820 and so to the introduction of British settlers for the first time into South Africa.

PROFESSOR A. P. NEWTON.



## Letters to the Editor

### Heredity and Hygiene

Sir,—Our country has the proud distinction of having led the world in hygiene, including sanitation and social work. It is, therefore, paradoxical that Great Britain should find herself to-day in a serious position in regard to health. As long ago as 1906, signs of poor physique led to a Royal Commission of enquiry. Despite the rise in the standard of living and improvement in extended medical facilities for all, from the pre-natal stage throughout adult life, the situation has not improved—witness the reductions of the standard of physique required for the Army since that year.

Leaders of the medical profession now call attention to one serious omission as largely responsible for this disheartening situation. The healthiest efficient part of the community has reduced numbers in family below replacement level, and our annual population increase has been from the rise in effective fertility of those less naturally vigorous, or actually diseased—this has been plainly stated as due to a complete disregard of heredity.

Sound knowledge of heredity must be more readily available for the best treatment of disease, for warding off onset and for prevention. To meet this need, the Bureau of Human Heredity has been set up under a Council representing our major medical and scientific societies, supported by international co-operation. This Council turns to the public for financial support. The sum needed for the next four years is only £12,000, since we can rely on expert voluntary help for that period.

One successful centre of information on heredity will make possible the gradual and steady reduction of the tally of suffering and disability. Three instances out of very many should bring this home: (1) The prevention of tuberculosis must now take into account the known transmission of resistance to the disease as well as absence of resistance; (2) many crippling deformities are so inherited that their recurrence could be prevented in one generation; (3) at least 15 eye diseases causing blindness are similarly transmitted, and can be done away with for our children.

R. RUGGLES GATES.  
R. A. FISHER.  
W. RUSSELL BRAIN.

*Bureau of Human Heredity,  
115, Gower Street, W.C.1.*

### The Empire and Special Areas

Sir,—We are all deeply concerned about the problem of the special areas, and agree that a solution must be found. But it is useless to create employment in one district at the expense of employment in another, as may well happen unless the ground is first carefully surveyed. Are there not already, in districts suffering heavily from unemployment, well-established industries which, if given adequate support, could find work for many thousands more men?

Important statistics continue to furnish an interesting if ironic commentary on our economic

life. I think it could easily be shown, for example, that industries in the special areas are suffering through competition from low-wage countries. Indeed, is it not a fact that, within the Empire itself, we are encouraging competition at the expense of employment in the United Kingdom? The low-wage problem is raised in an acute form in the imports from eastern Empire countries. It would seem to me as an onlooker that, if these imports are permitted, not only does United Kingdom employment suffer, but, inevitably, wage rates suffer too. Can it be disputed that these imports are a menace to the standard of living in Britain?

It has always seemed to me somewhat puzzling that certain United Kingdom exports to Empire countries are subject to a duty, whereas similar exports from those countries to the United Kingdom are free of duty. Is it not opportune, while the future of the special areas is being discussed, that this question of Empire import competition also be reviewed? Otherwise we may find ourselves relieving the burden of unemployment in one area only to create a like distress elsewhere.

J. W. BANFIELD, M.P.

*8, Guildford Street, London W.C.1.*

### Changes on Dartmoor

Sir,—Looking back over 60 years or more one who knows Dartmoor cannot but be struck by the changes which have occurred in the "unchanging Moor." To-day after heavy rains rivers come down in sudden spates lasting only a few hours instead of in gentle flood for two or three days. "Good fishing weather" is rare. Snipe, duck, teal and other water-loving birds, which used to be very plentiful in the Dartmoor marshes, are now rarely met with. Many streams which used to run through peat now have a gravel bed.

The causes of the change are natural erosion, drainage of marshes, and the wearing away of the peat, which acts, as does the humus of the forest, as a sponge, sucking in and gradually giving off water. Man has now taken a hand and the process is being accelerated.

The Forestry Department are planting large tracts of the Moor in the hope (not generally warranted by previous experience) of growing timber of commercial value. In so doing drainage trenches are cut which, damaging the "sponge," send down vast quantities of water and soil direct to the river.

It is also proposed to build a reservoir on the lower part of Taw Marsh, a plan which must inevitably harm the "sponge." Drawing its supply of water from a gradually diminishing source (eating its own body) it is doubtful whether, in time, there will be any water to fill the reservoir or to supply the River Taw.

But the most dangerous of all is the Rattlebrook scheme carried on under a concession already granted at a spot not far distant from Taw Marsh. Here it is proposed to cut away nearly 400 acres of the "sponge" itself, and it is stated that the company have an option over other vast portions of the Moor.

When peat is cut for fuel the tuftie requires from 50 to 60 years to renew the "sponge." The area cleared by the company will therefore be ruined for water conservation for at least that time, if not for ever. Probably the space cleared will become a gravel bed, and, once formed on the Moor, gravel spreads.

If the "sponge" on Dartmoor is removed the result will be rivers in big flood after heavy rains, and dry betweentimes, soil, already poor enough, washed away, pasture lands ruined, and the whole character of the Moor changed. If the value of the "sponge" is once recognised the danger can still be averted. The sad experience of many parts of the Empire and of the United States is a warning of what may otherwise happen.

COURTENAY BENNETT.

Archerton, Postbridge, Devon.

### Music and Drama

Sir,—It is very gratifying to all interested in the development of musical appreciation to see that the League of Audiences has secured the formation of a Music and Drama Committee in the House of Commons, a committee pledged to urge on Parliament a Music and Drama Bill, which will bring this country into line with other civilised countries which for generations have recognised music and drama as being as important and necessary to cultural welfare as museums, libraries and picture galleries.

Members of all parties support this movement, realising that by helping people to do things for themselves it will do for the mind of our nation what the Jubilee Trust proposes to do for the body, and that in a healthy democracy a sound mind is as important as a healthy body.

The League of Audiences, which is now just over a year old, has already the support of a number of important and influential bodies, notable among them the Performing Right Society, which, of course, controls the use of all copyright music both in this country and throughout the Dominions and Colonies, educational bodies, musical and theatrical associations, the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon—apart from substantial interests in mechanical music, which are sometimes supposed to be antagonistic to "music in the flesh."

In spite of our national diffidence on the subject, we are a musical people. We can show it by supporting the League of Audiences, and by turning out, if only now and again, to listen to a concert.

S. T. WEBBER.

Musical Director,

R. A. Lister Military Band.

### Congratulations

Sir,—May I, as one who has long had a sentimental affection for the *Saturday Review* under all its changes of staff and ownership offer my sincere congratulations on the continuance of a weekly paper that so well deserves to have its useful life prolonged?

Somehow I have never felt pessimistic about the paper's future. It has, I know, had its vicissitudes

in the past, but it has invariably bobbed up serenely and displayed renewed vigour as if the temporary uncertainty it had put behind it had inspired it to fresh triumphs. So, I feel, it will be again. And I like to think that one of the indications of its renewed strength will be increased attention to Imperial affairs, thus filling what many people think is a regrettable gap in the news that our Press provides for its public.

May the *Saturday Review* rise to greater heights of popularity than it has ever yet achieved and may it serve, with ever-increasing influence on the people in this country and in the overseas possessions of the Crown, to promote that complete understanding between all parts of the Empire that is so necessary for that Empire's preservation and for its work as a beneficent and peace-ensuring force in an unstable world.

J. H. HENDERSON.

Haverstock Hill, N.W.3.

### The Speed Limit

Sir,—No doubt you have seen the figures recording the total fatalities and the number of persons injured by motor traffic. The apathy and indifference to human suffering manifested by the authorities is not difficult to understand, for nearly every official owns a motor car. In a word, two millions of people possess motor vehicles, and the rest of us come under the heading of pedestrians. I feel sure the speed limit should be reduced to ten or twelve miles in built-up areas.

J. J.

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## YOUR INVESTMENTS

By Our City Editor

**H**AVING arrived at a stage of industrial and financial activity which seems in every way to herald an inflationary "boom," the experts are now telling us how we should avoid a slump. Mr. Keynes, in particular, is a great believer in monetary manipulation as a panacea for all our ills, provided such manipulation is exercised in time. He would prevent at all costs a rise in interest rates, and he thinks that this can be done now that we are free from the shackles of stabilised international exchanges and have a currency untied to gold. Similarly, we must not curb imports from primary producing countries because we shall discourage recovery in those countries, and the recent addition to our gold stock is held to show that we are able to finance such increased imports. But despite Mr. Keynes's arguments it would appear that "managed" money must soon find itself at the crossroads. Not only in this country but abroad have the beginnings of an inflationary "boom" been engineered by liberal doses of credit injected by Governments, and we have a general currency devaluation to provide a broader credit basis and to bring about a rise in currency prices.

First there is the rise in commodity prices throughout the world. As prices rise and industrial activity increases, more and more credit will be required to finance this activity. If no curb is placed by dearer money upon the growth of this rickety credit structure, then surely the time must come when no amount of credit injection can

maintain it. Then this structure must collapse like a house of cards.

### OUR ADVERSE TRADE BALANCE

As for the further encouragement of imports into this country, it is true that rising prices increase our "visible" adverse trade balance and that we must have the raw material supplies before any increase in our export trade can begin to show. For 1936 exports increased by £20,000,000, while imports were no less than £92,895,000 up, and the total excess of imports over exports for the year increased to over £347,000,000. Obviously the nation cannot long continue to finance other nations at this rate unless they in turn show themselves willing to increase their use of our shipping services, to give us a better return on the capital invested by Britain in their countries, and to compensate us in other ways by increasing our "invisible" export income. If imports of raw materials from the primary producers should not be discouraged, at least we should prevent the import of manufactured goods in direct competition with those of British producers. It is the international factor that seems to be ignored by the managed money enthusiasts. There is every sign that Wall Street, sooner or later, will enter upon a "boom," and money rates there will prove so attractive that funds will flow there from Europe and elsewhere. To imagine that this flow can be prevented or that there need be no response in interest rates here is to adopt an ostrich-like attitude towards the practical working of international finance. Already there are signs that credit injections in this country are having less and less effect, and the reception given to the latest Government issue, the £9,650,000 2½ per cent. Electric Transport Finance Loan, should be a warning that if a Defence Loan is to be "made to go" the terms must offer some attraction to the ordinary investor in Trustee stock. Mr. Keynes wants us to bear the brunt of the cost of defence out of income for the present, but one cannot go on increasing taxation without driving the investor into the fields of speculation.

### EVIDENCE OF SPECULATION

Already we have evidence of speculation in most directions. Commodities have risen, in some cases rather too rapidly, and a shortage of spot rubber and copper, for instance, has given the opportunity for a gamble. In the film world, we have the banks, through the medium of insurance guarantees, financing productions that are not always financially sound. Now, in the mining markets, activity is centred almost entirely on the purely speculative shares of companies who have yet to prove their properties rather than on the dividend payers. All this is evidence that the present policy is producing the desire for capital appreciation which is not subject to tax as opposed to investment income, which is taxable.

### WEST RAND FINANCING

The Anglo-American Corporation, one of the leading South African mining finance houses, is taking part in so many new ventures that it has found it necessary to pass on some of its holdings

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### Statement of Accounts

December 31st, 1936

LIABILITIES		£
Paid-up Capital	...	14,248,012
Reserve Fund	...	11,500,000
Current, Deposit and other Accounts	...	488,364,201
Acceptances and Confirmed Credits	...	11,054,418
Engagements	...	7,545,855
ASSETS		
Coin, Bank Notes and Balances with Bank of England	...	52,941,374
Balances with, and Cheques on other Banks	...	22,092,098
Money at Call and Short Notice	...	26,687,888
Investments at or under Market Value	...	127,892,039
Bills Discounted	...	21,791,113
British Treasury Bills	...	52,622,885
Advances to Customers and other Accounts	...	189,516,488
Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances, Confirmed Credits and Engagements	...	18,600,273
Bank Premises at Head Office and Branches	...	8,891,253
Other Properties and work in progress for extension of the business	...	994,343
Shares in Yorkshire Penny Bank Ltd.	...	937,500
Capital, Reserve & Undivided Profits of		
Belfast Banking Co. Ltd.	...	1,714,989
The Clydesdale Bank Ltd.	...	3,104,923
North of Scotland Bank Ltd.	...	2,496,738
Midland Bank Executor & Trustee Co. Ltd.	...	429,586

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— HEAD OFFICE: POULTRY, LONDON, E.C. 2 —



to new subsidiary finance companies. Recently its diamond holdings were transferred to the Anglo-American Investment Trust, and now West Rand Investment Trust has been formed with £4,000,000 capital to take over and finance the Western Reefs and other propositions in the Far West Rand purely in the development stage. The finance companies of the Anglo-American group are to subscribe £3,000,000 of the new company's 10s. shares, paying £4,500,000 for them, and the new company will acquire various shares of market value over £7,100,000 for about £3,600,000. The shares will then be introduced on the London market at a large premium. For those who are interested, one would still prefer an established share. Anglo-American were recommended in these columns at 30s. and again at 40s. Now they stand at 92s. 6d. and Central Mining at 29½ look more attractive.

The remarkable advance in copper consumption which has resulted in the temporary removal of all restriction of production and brought the price of the metal up from under £30 to over £50 per ton has very rightly also been responsible for a big rise in the price of the shares of the producing companies. Rhokana at 13½ and Roan Antelope at around 78s. would appear to have discounted a good deal of their undoubtedly fine prospects, but Selection Trust 10s. shares at 40s. have probably a good way still to go. The company's holdings include a big proportion of Rhodesian Coppers in addition to Base Metal shares. But tin shares, though not enjoying any great popularity, have more to offer the investor than coppers. Tin is not looking relatively dear any longer, and the shares still yield 7 per cent. or more. Pahang at 28s. 9d. and Renong at 49s. are still as attractive and reliable as any in the tin list.

HOTELS

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